

The Comical Historie of

Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

Anth. I am a tainted Weather of the flocke,
Meetest for death, the weakeſt kinde of fruit
Drops earlieſt to the ground, and ſo let me;
You cannot better be imploy'd, *Baffanio*,
Then to live ſtill and write mine Epitaph?

Enter Nerriſſa.

Duke. Came you from *Padua* from *Bellario*?

Ner. From both: my *L. Bellario* greets your Grace.

Baſſ. Why doſt thou whet thy knife ſo earneſtly?

Jew. To cut the forfeiture from that Bankrout there.

Grat. Not on thy ſoule: but on thy ſoule harſh Jew,
Thou mak'ſt thy knife keene: but no mettle can,
No, not the hangmans axe beare halfe the keenneſſe
Of thy ſaarp envie: can no prayers pearce thee?

Jew. No, none that thou haſt wit enough to make.

Grat. Obe thou damn'd, inexecrable dog,
And for thy life let juſtice be accuſd;
Thou almoſt mak'ſt me waver in my faith,
To hold opinion with *Pythagoras*,
That ſoules of Animals inſuſe themſelves
Into the trunks of men: Thy curriſh ſpirit
Govern'd a Wolfe, who hang'd for humane ſlaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell ſoule ſteer,
And whileſt thou layeſt in thy unhallowed durance;
Inſuſd it ſelfe in thee: for thy deſires
Are woolviſh, bloody, ſtarv'd, and ravenous.

Jew. Till thou canſt raile the ſcale from off my Bond,
Thou but offeſt thy lungs to ſpeake ſo loud:
Repaire thy wit good youth, or it will fall
To cureleſſe ruine. I ſtand for Law.

Duke. This letter from *Bellario* doth commend
A young and learned Doctor to our Court:
Where is he?

Ner. He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer whether youle admit him.

Duke. With all my heart: ſome three or foure of you

Go

the Merchant of Venice.

Go give him courteous conduct to this place,
Meane time the Court ſhall heare *Bellario's* Letter.

Your Grace ſhall underſtand, that at the receipt of your Letter, I
am very ſicke, but in the inſtant that your meſſenger came, in lo-
ving viſitation was with me a yong Doctor of *Rome*, his name is
Balthazar: I acquainted him with the cauſe in controverſie be-
tween the *Jew* and *Antonio* the Merchant; we turned ore many
books together, he is furniſhed with my opinion, which bettered
with his own learning, the greataeſſe whereof I cannot enough
commend, comes with him at my importunity, to fill up your
Graces request in my ſtead. I beſeech you let his lack of yeares be
no impediment to let him lack a reverend eſtimation, for I never
knew ſo young a body with ſo old a head: I leave him to your
Gracious acceptance, whoſe tryall ſhall better publiſh his com-
mendation.

Enter Portia for Balthazar.

Duke. You heare the learn'd *Bellario* what he writes,
And here I take it is the Doctor come.

Give me your hand, come you from old *Bellario*?

Por. I did my Lord.

Duke. You are welcome, take your place:

Are you acquainted with the difference,

That holds this preſent queſtion in the Court?

Por. I am enformed throughly of the cauſe,
Which is the Merchant here? and which the Jew?

Duke. *Antonio*, and old *Shylocke*, both ſtand forth.

Por. Is your name *Shylocke*?

Jew. *Shylocke* is my name.

Por. Of a ſtrange nature is the ſute you follow,
Yet in ſuch rule, that the *Venerian* Law

Cannot impugne you as you do proceed.

You ſtand within his danger, do you not?

Ant. I, ſo he ſayes.

Por. Do you confeſſe the Bond?

Ant. I do.

Por. Then muſt the Jew be mercifull.

Shy. On what compulſion muſt I, tell me that?

Por. The